



# WILDCAT

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## 345th MI DET returns from yearlong deployment

Story by SSG Derrick Witherspoon  
81st RSC PAO

JASPER, Ala. – Fighting the war on terrorism is a battle that many courageous soldiers are going forth and conquering on a daily basis, and some of these brave soldiers hail from the Jasper based A Company, Detachment 1, 345th Military Intelligence Battalion.

The 345th MI BN recently had seven of its soldiers return home from a yearlong deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The seven soldiers, out of a total of 27 that mobilized, received a warm welcome from family and friends during a demobilization ceremony honoring their accomplishments throughout their deployment.

Major Stanley J. Koryta, commander of A Co., Det. 1, 345th MI BN, said the jobs performed by the soldiers during the deployment played vital roles in the war on terrorism. “We supported the Coalition Forces Land Component Command

(CFLCC) where we assisted in intelligence operations that helped with the identification, location and targeting of Taliban and Al Qaeda Forces in Afghanistan,” Koryta said. “It was a long deployment, but we enjoyed it because we felt like we were contributing to the war on terror. We helped out the active duty forces there that needed the augmentation and we

really felt like we were making a difference for the entire effort.”

Staff Sergeant Christopher Glasscock, an imagery analyst with A Co., Det. 1, 345th MI BN, said the work experience they acquired was immeasurable. “We were working up to 14 or 16 hours a day, seven days a week at times, but at the same time learning so much. I worked in collection management where we gathered intelligence information for various units in theater, and I really enjoyed it,” Glasscock said. “At times it was political, which MI always is, and that made it a headache sometimes, and communication was difficult, you know, just because of the location where we were. We were in a different time zone, about nine or eight hours ahead of everyone in the states, so if you needed anything you might not be able to get in touch with someone in the states for a couple of hours.”

**“It was a long deployment, but we enjoyed it because we felt like we were contributing to the war on terror.”**

Major Stanley J. Koryta

Although communicating between countries may have been difficult, many of the soldiers said the communication within the unit was clear as a bell. “Because we are a small unit, the cohesion is much better than working with the whole company, considering the 345th is split into various companies. We know and respect everyone and that made the communication process a lot easier, which made doing our jobs



Photo by Staff Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon

Army Reservists from the 345th Military Intelligence Battalion are congratulated by their commander, Maj. Stanley J. Koryta (center), and the 81st RSC Senior Liaison Officer, Col. John F. Baynes (far left), for doing a great job during their deployment to Afghanistan.

easier,” said Spc. Robert J. Ladrillono, an intelligence analyst for A Co., Det. 1, 345th MI BN.

Koryta said the soldiers were outstanding and in many cases the commander of CFLCC, Lt. Gen. Paul T. Mikolashek, stated that they could not have accomplished many of the missions without them and the products they produced were some of

the best products they ever saw.

“They should be extremely proud of the job they did, how they did it, how they performed and they should take that with them and know that no one can take that away from them,” Koryta said. He added that the other 20 soldiers are scheduled to mobilize again, but although the date is undetermined at this time, he knows it will be soon. 🐾

## Reservists return home after answering call to duty

Story By Capt. Greg Majewski  
335th TSC

EAST POINT, Ga. - On a warm October day, 33 soldiers from the 335th Theater Signal Command gathered to be recognized for their service in “Operation Enduring Freedom.” Each one responded to their President’s call to rid the world of the “evil-doers” that had attacked this nation on a quiet September morn.

Mothers, fathers, husbands, and wives looked on with love as each soldier greeted their commander, Maj. Gen. Rip Detamore. They did not seek the accolade for doing their job. Each one knew what was expected of them.

A proud commander stood before his command, gladly returning a salute and a smile. “I have pride in each and every one

of you,” Detamore said. “I want to thank you for your professionalism and service.” Detamore also thanked the families present.

“Thank you for sharing your loved ones with us,” Detamore said. “I hope we’ve been able to take care of them, because it’s a team effort.”

The 335th’s commander says his focus has and always will be on the individual soldier.

“We take care of our soldiers. There’s no compromise in that,” Detamore said. “I’m pleased we did that and will continue to do so.”

The 335th Theater Signal Command reflects a true representation of what it means to be “An Army of One”.

Those honored represented both the citizen soldier and regular Army.

Detamore reminded his command that



Photo By Sgt. Eric Connor

Major General Rip Detamore pins an award on Staff Sgt. Michael Johnson from 335th Theater Signal Command.

much work still needs to be done, and should the need arise again, the 335th

stands ready and willing to perform whatever mission awaits it. 🐾



**Front cover:**  
Specialist Robert J. Ladrillono, 345th MI BN, gives his wife, Lutz, a kiss after returning home from a 360-day deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon, 81st RSC, PAO)

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# GENERAL COMMENTS



Maj. Gen. Michael R. Mayo

I thank you for the privilege of serving as your commander. While I know you did not have a choice, I hope I have served you well.

Each opportunity in life is a journey. My map when assuming command included several stops - the greatest of which was individual and unit readiness. Individual readiness included a good command climate, caring attitude, and meeting expectations of soldiers, civilians, and families. As I write this, I have just completed my 30th plus visit to a mobilizing unit. I think we have done well on this journey and I am awed by the esprit and motivation that each of you displayed. The United States of America is in great hands with our Armed Forces of today. You truly and

absolutely represent the “Army of One.” Watch out bin Laden, Hussein and others who dare attack our freedom. You ain’t seen nothing yet! The Army of the United States is coming your way with great units and soldiers from the 81st Regional Support Command - able and ready to take care of business.

I would be remissed in this final column if I didn’t recognize those who kept me in line, or at least tried. To Jane Standifer, who kept me in the right direction and on time and stacked the desk high each week; to Scottye Bryant, who answered the phone in a very pleasant manner, even when she knew it was me, and served as a great back-up to Jane; to Staff Sgt. Brenda Aguilar - always a friendly face and ready to do

what was necessary to complete missions; and finally to Jim Eggleton who absorbed my frustrations, always provided sage advice, and who I consider a close friend - Thank You All Very Much. I have not said that enough for all you four have done.

Finally, “Be Safe” in all you do. We train well to meet the enemy and I know that we will succeed when confronted by an adversary; but we are complacent when it comes to safety. Develop a battle buddy relationship and take care of each other. We do not need casualties and injuries from accidents.

Again, thanks for the great pleasure you gave me as your commander – it’s a gift I will always treasure.

*(Readiness-Soldiers-Families)*

## CHAPLAIN’S CHAT

As we boarded the C-141 to Saudi Arabia for the Gulf War, my commander turned to me and said, “Chaplain, I want you to begin right now thinking about the day that this unit comes home.” I confess that I was thinking only about going to war (my first time), my thoughts were of what was ahead. Like everyone else, I had left my family behind, my wife and two teenage girls. We had held each other and cried and prayed. The thought of preparing to come home was not in my mind.

Over the next six months, we would make our journey from Saudi, into Iraqi, then into Kuwait, then back to Saudi and finally back home again. We spent most of our time living in the desert. During that time I experienced things that I had never known. I had devoted myself to being fully a servant to the soldiers I ministered to. My desire was to experience everything that God had for me and that I would be used in His service to help others. I found that those months brought great personal struggles to most of the personnel around me, including myself. Individuals were molded and changed by the experience. Families back home were also changed by what was taking place. My own life is richer today because of the hardship and struggle of those times, and I thank God that I was able to be of service to my country and to my fellow soldier.

Now, we have a new war before us in the same region. Again, the job of the chaplain and the commander is to do all



Chaplain (Col.) Tommy W. Smith

they can do to accomplish the mission and then come home together. Our soldiers have always looked to the chaplains for guidance, especially when things got difficult. Our soldiers will have chaplain support wherever they go. The care of the soldier is the primary job of the chaplain.

We are always changed by crisis. We can never be the same, but we can be better. There is a bitter way and there is a better way. The decisions a soldier makes while away from his family, and the decisions a spouse makes, or a family makes, while separated from the soldier, will determine if the reunion will go well. Our goal is not only that our soldiers survive a deployment and come back home to family and friends, but also that each and every soldier come home a better person - proud to have served their country.

**“We are always changed by crisis. We can never be the same, but we can be better.”**

Chaplain (Col.) Tommy W. Smith

## CSM MEMOS

Am I personally ready to mobilize? This question haunted me during Desert Storm and now it haunts me today. The time period between an alert and actual mobilization of individuals and units is as little as a few days, and under current policy not only is it important that our high priority units and its personnel are ready to move out on order, every deployable soldier in this command must do the same. So yes, I’m personally ready for mobilization – are you?

I suggest every soldier prepare as if you are being called up next week. Ensure everyone important in your life knows what to do and when to do it. Sit down with your family, go over finances, duties around the house and other activities that will continue while you are away. Some of you may need someone to look after your home or car. Some may have banking or bill paying issues. Everyone should inform his or her employer that you are subject to mobilization and may have to leave with little notice. If you are a single parent, continue to confirm the commitment of those chosen to take care of your young children. We all have our own personal issues we must address and now is the time.

For those family members of soldiers already deployed, your unit family support group is ready to assist you. They have volunteers armed with information and sometimes points of contact to assist your needs. Use them, because you are the reason they exist.

Did you know if you arrive at the mob station and have problems with



Command Sgt. Maj. Jay Preston

your teeth that they will be pulled? Yes, the dental personnel at the mob station will not correct any dental problems. Visit your dentist to correct any problems you may have.

Your family members are eligible for many benefits and services while you are mobilized. To receive these benefits and services, each member must be enrolled in DEERS. Check with your unit and make an appointment to get enrolled or update your DEERS information.

We have thousands of soldiers in this command who are capable and ready to perform their mission whenever and wherever they are needed. Personal and family matters do not go away during a deployment, but with prior preparation and planning, hopefully the bulk of these issues can be resolved at home.

**“I suggest every soldier prepare as if you are being call up next week.”**

Command Sgt. Maj. Jay Preston

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# Law provides mobilizing personnel with financial relief

Story by **Benny L. Kass**  
**Washington Post**

WASHINGTON – In the buildup to a possible war with Iraq, thousands of military personnel have been called to active duty, and it is not clear how many more will be called upon to serve in the days or months to come.

Borrowers who have been called up for military duty are entitled to relief under a law known as the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act (SSCRA). These benefits apply regardless of the nature of the debt — mortgage, auto loans and credit cards.

The law, enacted by Congress at the start of World War II, requires all lenders to automatically reduce the interest rate obligations of people in active military service to 6 percent. (It should be noted that interest rates were higher when the law was first passed.)

How does this law work? Quite simply. If you — or a family member — has been called into active duty, the lender should be notified immediately. The lender is then required by law to immediately reduce the interest rate on your loan so that it does not exceed 6 percent.

This law applies only to debts incurred prior to the debtor going into active service. Debts incurred while in the military or after discharge are not covered.

The law is straightforward and a powerful tool designed to assist servicemen and women whose income is less while on active duty than it was in civilian life.

The law states: “No obligation or liability bearing interest at a rate in excess of 6 percent per year incurred by a person in military service before that person’s entry into that service shall, during any part of the period of military service, bear interest at a rate in excess of 6 percent per year unless, in the opinion of

the Court, upon application thereto by the obligee, the ability of such person in military service to pay interest upon such obligation or liability at a rate in excess of 6 percent per year is not materially affected by reason of such service.”

In simple terms, if you are on active military duty, which includes — in addition to the more obvious



examples — the Coast Guard, officers of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, your interest rate on your debt obligation must be cut to 6 percent.

You should immediately advise your lender that you have been called to active duty. Send your lender or lenders a letter, certified, return receipt, and enclose a copy of your mobilization orders. Your letter should also outline, in general terms, why your income will be, or has been, significantly reduced as a result of the call-up.

Unless the lender does not believe you, he must immediately comply with your request — and with the law. If your lender does not believe that your income

today is materially lower than when you were a civilian, the lender has the right to take you to court, but the burden to prove that you have not been “materially affected by reason of such service” falls squarely on the lender. You do not need a lawyer to defend you, but you should at least consult with legal counsel to understand the court process. You may also want to talk with the military legal officer assigned to your unit.

The benefits of the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act are retroactive. Thus, everything you have paid over 6 percent from the time you were called into military service must be credited toward your account.

It should be noted that the reduction in the interest rate must be accompanied by a reduction of the monthly payment. The lender cannot require you to continue to make your same payment each month and credit more toward principal.

Unfortunately, federally guaranteed student loans are not protected by the interest rate cap. However, from past experience, the Education Department has deferred or suspended payments on student loans while the debtor was on active military duty.

Creditors, however, are not left out in the cold. Any applicable statute of limitations (the time limits imposed by law for filing lawsuits) is extended for the same period of time that court action is delayed.

The law provides broad protections for those who have been called up to serve our country. Those protections begin on the date you enter active military service and will generally end within 30 to 60 days from the date you have been released.

But, the burden is on you — the service person or a member of the family — to advise the creditor and the court as soon as active duty begins. ☹

## TRICARE explains health care benefits for Guard and Reserve

Story courtesy of **TRICARE**

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – Members of the Reserves and National Guard who are called to active duty under Executive Order 13223, in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks are eligible for the same health care and dental benefits under TRICARE as other active duty service members. Moreover, for their eligible family members, TRICARE is offering newly enhanced health benefits under the TRICARE Reserve Family Demonstration Project. The demonstration supports continuity of health care for Reserve and Guard family members. The demonstration applies to all covered health care services provided on or after Sept. 14, 2001, and before Nov. 1, 2003.

The demonstration project does not change eligibility requirements for health benefits — family member eligibility begins on the effective date of the orders to active duty, provided the orders are for more than 30 days. Health care will be provided by uniformed services military treatment facilities, and by authorized civilian health care providers. New under the demonstration are the waiver of deductibles; authority for TRICARE to pay above the TRICARE allowable rates for care provided by non-participating providers; and waiver of the requirement for a non-availability statement (NAS) for inpatient care.

Families of activated Reserve and Guard members become eligible for TRICARE Standard or Extra on the first day of the military sponsor’s active duty, if the sponsor’s orders are for a period of more than 30 consecutive days of active duty. For active duty families, TRICARE Standard pays 80 percent of the TRICARE maximum allowable charge for covered health care services that are obtained from authorized, non-network, civilian health care providers. TRICARE Extra offers discounted cost shares (15 percent of

negotiated fees) when TRICARE network providers are used.

Persons who are covered by other health insurance (such as a civilian employer’s health plan) should be aware that TRICARE pays after those plans have made their payments for health care services. The only time TRICARE is not



second payer is when Medicaid (a public assistance program) is involved, or if the patient has a health care insurance policy that is specifically designated as a TRICARE supplemental policy. In those cases, TRICARE pays before the other insurance.

TRICARE Standard users should make sure that the provider from whom they seek health care has been certified by the regional TRICARE contractor as an authorized provider of care for TRICARE patients (check with the provider, or with the regional TRICARE contractor). If they receive services from a provider who is not authorized, the cost of services — even though they might otherwise be covered by the program — will not be shared by the government.

Activated Reserve and Guard members should update their information in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) database by visiting their local military ID card issuing facility. They should bring proper documentation to update their family file, such as a marriage certificate, birth certificate or divorce decree. Incorrect information can result in delayed claims processing, problems with the use of retail pharmacies and the National Mail Order Pharmacy benefit, and other difficulties. Beneficiaries may go online to find the three closest personnel offices or ID card facilities at <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/>. For more information about DEERS enrollment, beneficiaries may contact the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office (DSO) Telephone Center at 1-800-538-9552.

Activated Reservists or National Guard members may get more information about their family’s TRICARE Standard benefits from the TRICARE Standard Handbook. The handbooks are available at the nearest uniformed services hospital or clinic, or any TRICARE service center, or by writing to the TRICARE Management Activity, 16401 E. Centretch Parkway, Aurora, CO 80011-9043. Information is also available on the TRICARE Web site [www.tricare.osd.mil](http://www.tricare.osd.mil), from the Reserve Affairs Web site [www.defenselink.mil/ra](http://www.defenselink.mil/ra), or by calling the worldwide TRICARE Information Center toll-free at 1-888-DoD-CARE (1-888-363-2273). ☹



# Absent reservists may endanger education benefits

Story by Col. Henry L. Payne  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Selected Reserve members who use government-provided education benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill- Selected Reserve, but fail to participate satisfactorily during their obligated period of service will have to refund their unearned benefits. Examples of this include service members who excessively fail to attend scheduled training, fail the physical fitness testing or do not complete required military courses.

Congress enacted the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) in July 1985 as a recruiting and retention tool for military services. This program continues to be a tremendous incentive program for the services and a valuable benefit for the service members. It provides the services a better-educated service member while assisting the member in the pursuit of higher education.

Reserve component members who enlist, re-enlist or extend in the Selected Reserve for a six-year contract, possess a high school or equivalent diploma and have successfully completed Initial Active Duty for Training are authorized Montgomery GI Bill benefits. However, the law establishes eligibility for MGIB-SR benefits, requiring continuous satisfactory membership in the Selected Reserve during the period of eligibility.

Selected Reserve members are eligible for up to 36 months of MGIB-SR educational benefits once they complete initial active duty for training. They have 10 years to use the benefits but must remain a Selected Reserve member in order to participate in the program. The MGIB-SR program is funded by the reserve components, not the service members themselves. This differs from the MGIB-Active Duty Program, as Congress provides funding to the Department of Veteran Affairs for the program. Additionally, active duty members must elect to participate in the program

and are required to have their pay reduced by \$100 for the first 12 months of their active duty service.

Most people identify members of the Selected Reserve as service members who typically have attended training one weekend each month and two weeks a year. Reservists who accrue nine or more unauthorized absences from drills over a one-year period are placed into the “unsatisfactory” category. After due process by the commander these members may be transferred



to the Individual Ready Reserve and may lose their eligibility for educational assistance under the MGIB-SR.

Because they are no longer members of the Selected Reserve, their entitlements to the Montgomery GI Bill benefits are normally terminated. Such a penalty is specified in law and is a provision of the contract Guard and Reserve members sign when joining the Selected Reserve. When circumstances that prevent a service member from continuing in the Selected Reserve through no fault of the

member’s, such as civilian job requirements or relocation, family health issues, a one-year absence from the Selected Reserve may be authorized. However, if the service member fails to re-affiliate with the Selected Reserve within the one year, MGIB-SR benefits are terminated and recoupment action, if necessary, will proceed. Once benefits are terminated, they cannot be reinstated.

The collection of GI Bill payments to affected service members is slated to start Oct. 1. The collection action, when necessary, will be through the Defense Finance and Accounting Services and could involve garnishment of wages and assistance from the Internal Revenue Service as part of the collection process.

Improved personnel data management systems and new interagency agreements now enable all the reserve components to better identify, track and request refund of unearned benefits paid to reservists who do not fulfill their contractual obligation. The Naval Reserve has processed these actions manually for some time.

Effective Oct. 1, Selected Reserve members going to school full-time under the Montgomery GI Bill will receive \$276 per month. Reservists who’ve used all or part of their educational benefits but failed to complete their service obligation and now have to repay them could owe thousands of dollars, depending on how much of their service obligation they completed.

The intent of MGIB-SR recoupment is to ensure that the service member refunds, as required by law, any MGIB-SR educational benefits not entitled to, based on failure to meet contractual obligations in the Selected Reserve. Rather than recouping the money, the services would prefer to have service members remain in the Selected Reserve and complete their obligation. ☹

## Army Reservists scheduled for Smallpox vaccinations

Story by MSG Vicki L. Washington  
Army Reserve Public Affairs

FORT McPHERSON, GA—Like their active component counterparts, Army Reservists will begin receiving a smallpox vaccination. This following a December directive from the commander-in-chief, Pres. George W. Bush, ordering all Department of Defense military personnel get a smallpox vaccination.

According to the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) Surgeon, the vaccination will be given to Reservists at their mobilization station if they are being mobilized to a high threat area.

Colonel Paul Ruble says the mandatory inoculation is necessary because of the threat of smallpox being used as a bio-weapon against our military force.

“When the smallpox virus was officially declared eradicated in 1980, there was a debate whether or not to retain samples of the virus for research purposes,” Ruble said. “At that time the decision was made for samples to be kept at the CDC in Atlanta and in the Soviet

Union for scientific research and vaccine development.”

Ruble pointed out that even though smallpox had been considered eradicated, recent concerns about rogue nations having access to the virus and about the virus being used as a biological weapon have spurred the need for protecting soldiers.

“When the Department of Defense began the vaccination program the decision was made to offer it to healthcare workers first because they would be exposed while treating an outbreak,” said Ruble. “Soldiers who serve in high-risk areas will also receive the vaccination.”

The USAR Surgeon was quick to point out that even though some soldiers had been vaccinated for smallpox in the past, unless they received that vaccination within the past five years they will need to receive a new immunization.

“You might still have some immunity to the virus even if you received a smallpox vaccination within the past 10 years but you will still need to be vaccinated to be



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michele Hammonds

**Army Reservists from the 310th Chemical Company dawn their protective mask during a nuclear, biological or chemical agent exercise. Although the NBC suit is a good form of protection, vaccinations are still necessary.**

protected,” Ruble said.

According to Ruble, smallpox is spread by face-to-face contact with an infected person and is extremely contagious and deadly. The vaccine provides 95 percent immunity in those individuals who have never been exposed to the virus, but it can also protect someone who gets vaccinated up to three days after their exposure.

He stressed that the vaccine is safe and side effects are usually mild. They include sore arm, fever, headache, body ache and fatigue and peak after eight to 12 days following vaccination.

“Serious side effects from the vaccination are rare,” Ruble stressed,

“when compared to the 30 percent mortality rate if you are exposed to smallpox without a vaccination.”

The USARC Surgeon says there will be some reservists who will be excluded from getting the vaccination, such as people with compromised immune systems or who are pregnant. Having a medical exclusion does not prevent a soldier from being deployable, however, if there were a smallpox outbreak, that medically excluded soldier’s vaccination status would be reevaluated.

For soldiers who do not meet the exclusion criteria, refusal is not an option. Since this is a force health protection issue, continued refusal could result in serious consequences for the soldier. ☹

**“Soldiers who serve in high-risk areas will also receive the vaccination.”**

Colonel Paul Ruble



# 2125th GSU lends support to mobilizing soldiers

Story by Maj. Jan Northstar  
2125th GSU, PAO

DECATUR, Ga. – More than 36,800 Army Reserve and National Guard soldiers have been activated in the “war on terrorism” since Sept. 11, 2001, and the 2125th Garrison Support Unit (GSU) has been there every step of the way, providing force protection and ensuring thousands of soldiers’ readiness for deployment.

The 2125th GSU answered the call to duty on Sept. 28, 2001, with the activation of its MP detachment to support Fort Bragg, N.C., in security and law enforcement. The headquarters, located in Decatur, Ga., soon followed on Oct. 15 to prepare for the influx of reserve and guard troops.

Home to the 18th Airborne Corps and U.S. Army Special Operations Command, elements of Fort Bragg’s elite units, like the 82nd Airborne Division, can be anywhere in the world in as little as 18 hours. The 2125th plays a necessary role in Fort Bragg’s ability to maintain its status as the premier power projection platform by integrating Army Reserve and National Guard units into the active structure. Making sure a mobilized soldier is trained, healthy, properly outfitted and equipped, paid accurately and has legal affairs in order before going into a combat theater, is crucial.

Fort Bragg Garrison Commander, Col. Tad Davis, said, “The key to success has been the 2125th GSU. Without their presence at this crucial time, the mobilization of units wouldn’t have been accomplished to standard. They have a unique capability and a wealth of experience in dealing with the reserve components which enhanced immediately their ability to receive, validate and deploy nearly 190 units.”

Garrison support units are the result of lessons learned during Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield, when deploying active component units took essential personnel needed to run their home installations. These included basic infrastructure services such as military police, personnel/administration, finance, logistics, public works, training and operations, staff judge advocate, chaplain and public affairs. The garrison support units were

**“The 2125th has taken on a greater responsibility than any other GSU in the Army.”**

Colonel Tad Davis



Photo by Capt. Jan Northstar

**Staff Sergeant Anthony Green, a nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) noncommissioned officer with the 2125th GSU, instructs deploying soldiers on how to detect chemical agents in the field.**

organized to provide the types of skills needed to keep the installation functioning after much of its infrastructure has deployed.

When the 2125th formed at East Point, Ga., in 1994, its only mission was to be prepared to augment Fort Bragg if the 18th Airborne Corps deployed. Today, according to Col. Jeff Jacobs, 2125th GSU commander, with its multi-faceted role, the GSU does more than expand the installation.

“We’ve learned that the GSU is not simply an installation staff augmentation element. We’re a brigade-level command and control headquarters that commands and controls mobilizing and demobilizing units, and coordinates the mobilization process for the installation,” Jacobs said.

At Fort Bragg, the 2125th GSU, along with installation staff agencies, operate the Mobilization Unit Inprocessing Center (MUIC) designed to engage

the advance parties of units notified of mobilization at Fort Bragg. Once the unit arrives, the GSU provides full support, to ensure seamless transition from reserve status to active duty.

“We follow the FORSCOM Mobilization and Deployment Planning System (FORMDEPS) probably better than any other installation. Soldiers mobilizing at Fort Bragg are guaranteed to have everything they need when they deploy,” Jacobs said. “One thing that we take particular care in doing is ensuring that every piece of equipment is fully mission capable. Every weapon, vehicle, generator, radio or night vision device is inspected and fixed to make sure it works on the battlefield.”

Davis Said, “The 2125th has taken on a greater responsibility than any other GSU in the Army. Their ability to focus on mobilization allowed installation organizations to provide similar support to active component soldiers deployed in the war on terrorism. They epitomize the finest quality of ‘citizen-soldiers.’”

## Army uses Distance Learning System to train soldiers

Story by Staff Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon  
81st RSC, PAO

ANNISTON, Ala. – The U.S. Army is known for having highly trained and well equipped soldiers, and many of these soldiers are not only being trained on the battlefield, but also in places that are commonly used everyday: Classrooms.

The Distributed Learning System (DLS), formally known as the Army Distance Learning Program (TADLP), which falls under the U.S. Army’s Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), was officially established in October 1997 to help provide a quality distance learning system to all Army components in the most expeditious and cost-effective manner possible. Since the program’s startup, distance learning has flourished and the program has fielded over 240 Digital Training Facilities (DTFs) that have trained over 320,000 students.

“Our military leaders have recognized that the battlefields in our Nation’s future bear little resemblance to those seen in the 20th century,” said Joan Blackwell, a DTF manager located in Anniston, Ala. “Fighting and winning will require our forces to become more responsive, deployable and versatile.”

Blackwell said TRADOC is currently redesigning the way soldiers train. “By 2010, their goal is to produce soldiers and leaders who will be less

specialized and more multi-skilled, adaptive, and innovative. In short, capable of meeting all battlefield challenges. That’s where DLS’s network of digital training facilities come in,” Blackwell said. She added



that approximately one-half of the Objective Force’s training would be provided through distance learning.

“Clearly, the emphasis of distance learning is on team building and life-long learning,” Blackwell said. “Soldiers are able to refresh their skills, meet their mission training requirements, and even have ready access to educational opportunities that wouldn’t have been possible otherwise, such as, college and university courses from distant locations.”

Blackwell went on to say that it’s the DTF classrooms that provide the optimal training environment. “Each is built according to specific guidelines for lighting,

noise attenuation, etc. Even the color scheme and multi-adjust chairs are designed to make the DTF classroom a place conducive to learning,” Blackwell added. “To the casual observer, the DLS looks like a network of computer classrooms outfitted with high-speed Internet connections and video-teleconferencing capability. To the individual soldier, however, it will prove to be a nearby state of the art classroom where he or she can go for the most up-to-date mission related training and still be home for supper.”

Blackwell said the easiest place to get information on the Distributed Learning System is at the DLS Web site: [www.dls.army.mil](http://www.dls.army.mil). “The Web site provides a list of all DLS DTF classrooms, along with point of contact information. When you click on the person’s name it brings up an e-mail window. If you’d rather have a phone number, there is a statement near the top of the webpage, under the ‘Installations’ section, that reads: ‘For additional DTF contact information click here.’ Clicking that link brings up a Microsoft Word chart containing complete contact information, to include the phone number and physical address for each site,” Blackwell said.

So, as more soldiers head into the classroom to receive training and apply it to the battlefield, the more prepared they will be to continue to protect and defend our great nation and its allies against any potential threats that may arise in the future.



# Mobilizations: Preperation is the key to Army Reservists mobilization success

# Automobiles

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Conrad  
OCAR

If a Reservist has a car and plans to take it to the mobilization site, the Reservist will need to make plans for long-term storage. A soldier should consider having their agent contact the automobile insurance agent, and reduce the collision and liability coverage. Check the car registration to determine if the agent will need to renew it as well as ensure any property taxes are paid. Additionally, ensure the driver’s license will not expire during your estimated deployment period, or arrange renewal with your state.

### Leased Vehicles

What if you have a leased vehicle, and you wish to terminate the lease upon deployment? Currently, there is no federal law that requires an automobile leasing company to take back a leased vehicle prior to the lease termination date. Many leases provide that if you return a vehicle early, that the leasing company can charge you an early termination penalty. Some of their early termination penalties are quite steep. You can contact the leasing company, provide them with a copy of your deployment orders, and ask them to waive the early termination penalty, and hopefully many will do so. Also many auto leases will not allow you to take a vehicle out of a state for an extended period of time or take a leased

vehicle out of the continental United States. You should also be aware that since most auto leases have an “option to buy” clause, that the courts have determined that such language converts the lease into an installment contract that is protected by the Soldiers and Sailors Civil



Relief Act (SSCRA) from allowing the leasing company to involuntarily repossess any such vehicle, or be subject to federal penalties.

### Vehicle Loans

What if you have a loan on your vehicle at a rate greater than 6 percent interest per year? The SSCRA provides that you may ask the creditor to reduce your car loan while you are deployed to 6 percent interest per year, and any interest above that amount is forgiven. The burden is on the lender to show that the soldier is not

“materially affected” by their military duty (e.g., suffered a reduction in income), or they must agree to reduce the interest rate on the vehicle to 6 percent interest per year. The soldier can assert this SSCRA 6 percent interest cap by sending the lender a written request for interest rate reduction, with a copy of their orders. (Sending this request by certified mail is strongly recommended.) If the lender fails to respond or to contest the allegation that the soldier is materially affected within a reasonable period of time (30 days or less), the debtor can go into court and seek court assistance in enforcing the SSCRA 6 percent interest cap. More information and sample letters for notifying creditors may be found at the Army Judge Advocate Corps Web site at [www.jagcnet@army.mil](http://www.jagcnet@army.mil) . and the Department of Defense Reserve Affairs web site at <http://www.defenselink.mil/ra/family/toolkit/>.

### Vehicle Property Tax

Finally, if a soldier is deployed and takes their car with them, and the soldier is now situated in a different state based upon military orders, he would not owe personal property taxes on his vehicle to the gaining state. The SSCRA provides that a soldier, who maintains a permanent place of domicile in another state, does not become obligated to pay their new state’s personal property tax. In other words, the soldier is not required to pay taxes on their vehicle in his home state and in the new state they reside because of military orders, even if the soldier’s home state does not charge a personal property tax. ☹

# Estate Planning

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Conrad  
OCAR

In response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush has authorized a partial mobilization of the Ready Reserve of all the military services. So far, nearly 11,000 Army Reservists have been mobilized. In the near future more reservists may be mobilized to support the current crisis. What does a reservist need to do to leave personal affairs in good order upon receiving activation orders? Begin planning now-it is too late to prepare when you receive mobilization orders!

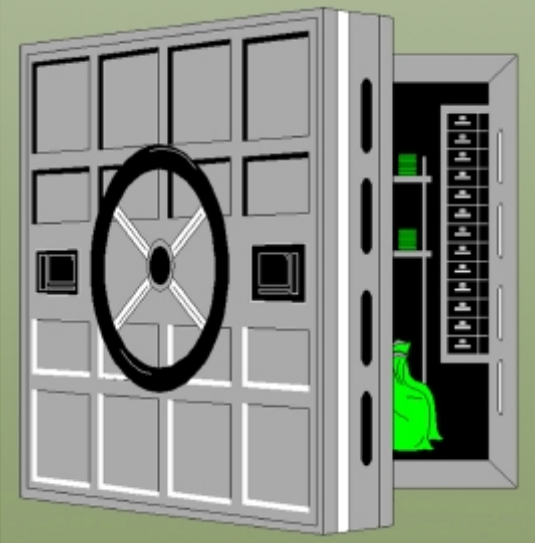
Often there may be legal or economic issues that will occur and unless the soldier has given someone (spouse, parent, or trusted friend) the express written permission to act on their behalf, there could be a problem.

### Financial Accounts

If all bank accounts, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and other investments are in the soldier’s name alone, and the individual is deployed, the soldier’s spouse or designated agent (such as a parent) may have trouble accessing the account to pay bills. Since military pay will be electronically forwarded to a reservists’ designated bank account, it usually makes sense to put a spouse or someone of trust to pay bills while a reservist is gone (e.g., a parent or trusted friend or relative) - consequently, they need ready access to the account. Ideally, the soldier should set up automatic deposit and payments

for regularly recurring bills and obligations while they are gone.

A reservist may also elect to put all accounts in his or her name and that of their spouse or appointed agent (but not both). Joint accounts, in most states and the money left in those



accounts can also be readily accessed by the reservist’s spouse or designated agent upon death. The bank or investment company can assist in changing the soldier’s current account to a joint bank account.

### Fianancial Planning

A spouse must also thoroughly understand the impact of any reduction of income resulting from a soldier’s activation, and plan to handle any reduced income by setting up a budget to

live on. Additionally, a spouse or agent must be informed about the location of important financial and personal documents. Valuable documents that are not use regularly should be put in a safety deposit box or home safe. A folder should also be set up to hold all receipts and financial documents received while the soldier is deployed for easy reference.

### Power of Attorney

A soldier may also want someone to take care of turning in a leased vehicle to the leasing company or may need to ship or store household goods. How can a mobilized soldier be protected? They must see the local Judge Advocate officer so they can prepare a power of attorney document for the designated agent to act on their behalf. The military attorney will explain the difference between a general power of attorney, that lets the person who receives it do basically any legal act that the soldier could do for a certain period of time, or a special power of attorney that grants a person the right to do some specific act such as sell your car or file a joint tax return. Typically, when a soldier is preparing for deployment, they would grant the agent a general power of attorney. Federal law now provides for military attorneys to provide powers of attorney that will be honored by all states. The length of the power of attorney can be limited so it is automatically revoked upon the soldier’s return or have the military lawyer prepare a revocation document to end a power of attorney. ☹



# Mobilizations: Preperation is the key to Army Reservists mobilization success

## Apartment/House

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Conrad  
OCAR

What do you do if you receive orders to deploy and you are currently renting an apartment, prior to entering active duty? The Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act (SSCRA) allows you to terminate a pre-service apartment/house lease, upon presenting the landlord with a written notice of termination and a copy of your orders. You do not have to show that you are suffering some hardship to request a lease termination. You do have to give the landlord at least 30 days notice before moving out.

### Written Notice

You gave written notice to your landlord that you want to terminate your lease. You will still have to pay rent for a short while. Your landlord can charge you rent for 30 days after the date your next rent is due, after the date you give your written notice. Example: You give notice on 15 December. Your next rent is normally due 1 January. The landlord can make you pay rent until 31 January. The key is to get the written notice in the landlord's hands just as soon as possible.

The landlord may not withhold your security deposit for moving out early and terminating your lease, but he may deduct legitimate damages from the security deposit amount. Landlords who violate this provision of the SSCRA potentially face criminal penalties. Remember once you are on active duty, you can only terminate a valid lease by making sure it includes a

"military clause" that provides for lease termination upon presentation of orders moving you out of the local



area. Your military legal assistance attorney can advise you on how to add a military clause into a lease.

### SSCRA Protection

Most SSCRA protection commences on the day you receive your orders to active duty. As a practical matter, you should be ready, and expect to present a copy of those orders to whomever you ask for some right or benefit under the Act.

I have heard about 6 percent loans. How do I get them? You may be entitled to have the interest rate on some of your loans reduced to 6 percent, such as home loans, for the time you are on active duty. There are a number of special requirements. You need to talk to a

Legal Assistance Attorney to ensure you are eligible. You may be eligible if you and your loan meet the following conditions: You took out the loan during a time when you were not on any form of active duty in any branch of the military; The interest rate is currently above 6 percent per year; Your military service affects your ability to pay the loan at the regular (pre-service) interest rate. Generally this requirement means that you make less money in the military than you made as a civilian.

You notified the lender in writing. (I suggest you enclose a copy of your orders and sent the notice by certified mail.)

### Mortgage Loans

Among the types of loans and obligations subject to the 6 percent interest cap are credit card debt, mortgage loans, and personal loans. Unfortunately, federally guaranteed student loans are not covered by the SSCRA 6 percent interest cap.

On September 24, 2001, Housing and Urban Development Secretary Martinez announced that he strongly urges all mortgage lenders to reduce all activated reservists' mortgage interest rates to 6 percent and he further requested that mortgage lenders postpone principal payments on all service member mortgages during their activation and three months thereafter. He urged service members with questions on their mortgages to contact a HUD toll-free number, 1-888-297-8685. Forms for requesting the 6 percent interest cap can be found at JAGCNET and the DOD websites referenced above. 🐾

## Wills/Healthcare

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Conrad  
OCAR

While you are meeting with a military attorney, an Army Reservist should have him review any current will to determine if it still meets the initial needs and desires. The military attorney may suggest a will that provides a trust for the reservist's children's finances - perhaps until they are at an age that is appropriate for them to receive any estate portion. If an Army Reservist doesn't have a will, they should consider getting one, in order to have some control as to what happens to their property upon death and who decides who gets what, especially if there is significant savings and/or real estate holdings. The court can also appoint someone as the guardian of children and their finances if something would happen.

### Wills

A "living will" provision can also be drafted to express the Reservist's desires as to whether they wish to have someone else decide to keep them alive, if they are mentally incapacitated or in a coma. A military or civilian attorney can draft such a will. Make sure you let the designated person as the will executor or administrator know where the will is secured, so he or she can quickly recover it if something may happen. That person should also know of any special burial instructions or wishes by a separate burial direction letter.

### Life Insurance

If a reservist thinks they are going to deploy, they should review your life insurance holdings. An Army Reservist is eligible for up to \$ 250,000 in Servicemen's

Group Life Insurance (SGLI) coverage upon activation. The soldier should also check any other commercial life insurance to see if that life insurance policy excludes paying if the member is killed during conflict or military service. Many military oriented life insurance companies waive this "war clause"



exclusion. If the soldier is unsure whether their commercial life insurance covers them in case of combat or military death, the insurance agent must be contacted for clarification in writing. The employer Human Relations Office may need to be contacted if the Reserve soldier's employer provides life insurance to see whether the policy will cover any military death. The soldier may want to purchase additional commercial life insurance if there are concerns.

### Health Care

An Army Reservist is entitled to extension of employer health care coverage while activated under

the Uniform Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), and if they are self-employed, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act (SSCRA) provides some protection against an insurance company refusing to reinsure the soldier and their family after return from active duty.

Congress has recently extended health care coverage under the military TRICARE health system for family members once a Reserve soldier is activated. TRICARE coverage information can be obtained from the TRICARE website, at [www.tricare.osd.mil](http://www.tricare.osd.mil).

### DEERS

If a soldier's family members are not currently enrolled in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System (DEERS), they need to obtain military identification cards and get enrolled in the system so they will be readily eligible for medical care upon the soldier's deployment. Family members will need to bring valid picture identification, social security numbers, birth certificates and marriage license/divorce documents to get their military identification cards and get enrolled in DEERS. If a soldier's family already has military identification cards, they need to make sure the ID cards are up to date and will not expire while the reservist is gone. If no other health care insurance is available when the reservist is activated, the soldier may also want to explore purchasing a TRICARE supplemental policy to pay for items not covered by the deductible charged. The soldier should also explore coverage under the military Family Member Dental Plan, or ensure continued coverage under their current dental insurance if activated. 🐾



# Military police serve, protect

Story by Sgt. Yves-Marie J. Casimir  
210th MPAD

RALEIGH, N.C. – Civilian law enforcement officers, who also serve as Army Reserve Military Police (MP), are on our nation’s frontline defense against terrorism at home. When ordered, these part-time soldiers willingly deploy to anyplace on the planet to guard prisoners, defend military installations and protect military assets.

The MP Corps is one of many military occupational specialties that translates directly to a civilian job, but few civilian job and military career combinations place an individual on the frontline all of the time. There is another interesting aspect to some of these dual servants of the 805th MP company of Raleigh, many of them give even more of themselves by volunteering for various organizations in their community.

Sergeant Jeremy M. Johnson’s civilian career as a Wake County Sheriff is very similar to his job in the military. Johnson uses the knowledge gained as a military policeman to benefit himself and the Wake County Sheriff’s Department. “I call it military familiarity of weapons. My military training ties in directly with the civilian police sector and vice versa. When I entered civilian law enforcement, I already knew marching and facing movements, this allowed me to help train other recruits during BLET or basic law enforcement training” Johnson said.

BLET is a required entrance course, which all North Carolina law enforcement officers must complete.

“My military police experience benefited me a lot during BLET,” added Spc. Alfred James Peterson, an 805th MP and Mt.



Photo by Spc. William P. Hart, Jr.

**Sergeant William E. Lemke, left, coaches Spc. George S. Clarkson, an MP with the 805th MP CO, as he shoots to re-qualify on the 9mm handgun range at Fort Bragg, N.C.**

Olive police officer. “Having fired a weapon in the military, I felt more comfortable during the initial civilian training.

Besides basic weaponry skills and drill and ceremony training, another civilian military police similarity includes the real-life risk of both jobs.

**“...things are a lot different when you’re working with civilians and not just soldiers.”**

Sergeant William E. Lemke

“My civilian job is much more risky,” said Sgt. William E. Lemke of the 805th and full-time Duke University campus police officer. “Though the jurisdiction is similar to that of a post, things are a lot different when you’re working with civilians and not just soldiers.”

On the other hand, Sgt. 1st Class Rodney K. Downey, a Federal Medical Center Corrections Officer and 805th MP, feels much safer in his civilian career. “In

the field or on the outside you never know who you’re dealing with or whether or not they’re armed. I much rather prefer working in the prison. Working with federal inmates on a daily basis allows me the opportunity to utilize my leadership skills I’ve acquired as a supervisor in the 805th. With the inmates, I’ve got to be straight, fair and disciplined,” Downey said.

“My soldiers are experts in this field because they have this sort of dual training, and they make up the bulk of this unit,” said Capt. George S. Clarkson, unit commander, who also has dual duty as a Charlotte and Mecklenburg patrol officer.

The disciplined soldiers of the 805th have dedicated their careers, both civilian and military, to public service. From volunteer firemen to emergency medical technician and a little league football coach, the 805th is full of well-trained and dedicated civil servants. 🐾

## Army Reservists go the distance for Army Ten-Miler

Story by SSG Derrick Witherspoon  
81st RSC, PAO

WASHINGTON – Army values and the terrorists’ attacks on September 11, 2001, was the fuel that drove three 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) Army Reservists to go the distance in one of the largest races held in America.

Captain Kris Clark, Company A, 427th Medical Logistical Battalion, Forest Park, Ga.; Master Sgt. Mark Jordan, 427th Medical Logistics Battalion, Forest Park, Ga.; and Master Sgt. Raul Claudio, 81st RSC, Birmingham, Ala., were just three of approximately 12,000 service members and civilians who ran in the 18th Annual Army Ten-Miler held in Washington. The Army Ten-Miler is the largest 10-mile race held in the United States.

Jordan said preparing for the race was challenging, but well worth it. “My training consisted of running between three and six miles three times a week and doing at least one eight to nine mile run per week. Also, running intervals at least once a week helped me to build up my speed.”

Claudio, who had a run time of 1:13:01, said training was not a problem for him. “I trained for the Army Ten-Miler three weeks prior to the run. I got on the treadmill and ran four times a

week for about 45 minutes to an hour and a half a day. I was also training for a physical fitness test I had right before the run, which really helped me.”

Clark said in spite of the limited

six weeks prior to the run. I was very proud of my time, however, because I’ve never ran more than eight miles in my life it was tough,” Clark said. “This was the first time that I ever ran

start training early.”

The “Logistical Nightmare,” which was the name of the three-soldier team, said the camaraderie of the runners in the race was felt throughout the air. “I felt that there definitely was a sense of camaraderie in the air. I left active duty in September of 2000 and I kind of miss the camaraderie that is part of being an active duty soldier,” Clark said.

“I also sensed the camaraderie during the race, but there was also a sense of competitiveness,” Claudio added. “Although the Army Reserve wasn’t very victorious this year, next year victory will be ours!”

All the runners said they plan to run in next year’s race. “I expect to train all next year to make sure I cut at least 25 minutes off this year’s run time, so expect me to be in the top 10 runners for 2003,” Claudio said. Clark added that she also plans to run next year, and although she will be living in Fairbanks, Alaska, is planning to run with the 427th’s team again.

Although these soldiers may not have reached their personal goals during this year’s Army Ten-Miler, it’s quite evident that their persistence and determination will help give them a running start to attain those goals during next year’s race. 🐾



Photo courtesy of Master Sgt. Mark Jordan

**From left to right: Master Sgt. Raul Claudio, Capt. Kris Clark and Master Sgt. Mark Jordan, prepare to run in the Army Ten-Miler.**

amount of time she had to train, she is proud of her run time of 1:45:00. “I only found out during the last week in August that the unit was getting a team together, so I only trained for about

10 miles, and I think I did very well for only training for six weeks. I would like to get my time down to about 1:30:00 next time, that’s about nine minute miles. I think I can do it if I



# New uniform regulation brings necessary changes

Story by Staff Sgt. Marcia Triggs  
Army Link News

WASHINGTON - The most current uniform policy regulation went online June 25, and clarification of the Army’s tattoo policy is only one of two-dozen changes or updates that took effect Aug. 1.

The one change people won’t see in the regulation is: males having the authority to carry umbrellas. The Army is not ready for that change, said Master Sgt. Kittie Messman, the uniform policy noncommissioned officer for the Army’s G-1.

Last December the Army announced that changes were being staffed, and the tattoo policy is one that underwent the most modifications.

“Under the old regulation, tattoos were prohibited on the face, neck and head. ... Now, it states that tattoos are not to be visible in the Class A uniform with trousers. So there is a common standard for both males and females,” Messman said.

Soldiers who currently have tattoos on their hands will be “grand-fathered” and allowed to keep them, Messman said, as long as the tattoos are inoffensive.

Counseling requirements for commanders with soldiers who have tattoos are also outlined in the updated regulation. Offensive tattoos anywhere on the body are prohibited, but tattoos that are not offensive need to be documented in a written report at the discretion of the commander.

To eliminate subjective opinions from one command to the next, the soldier will present the written documentation at his new assignment, Messman said.

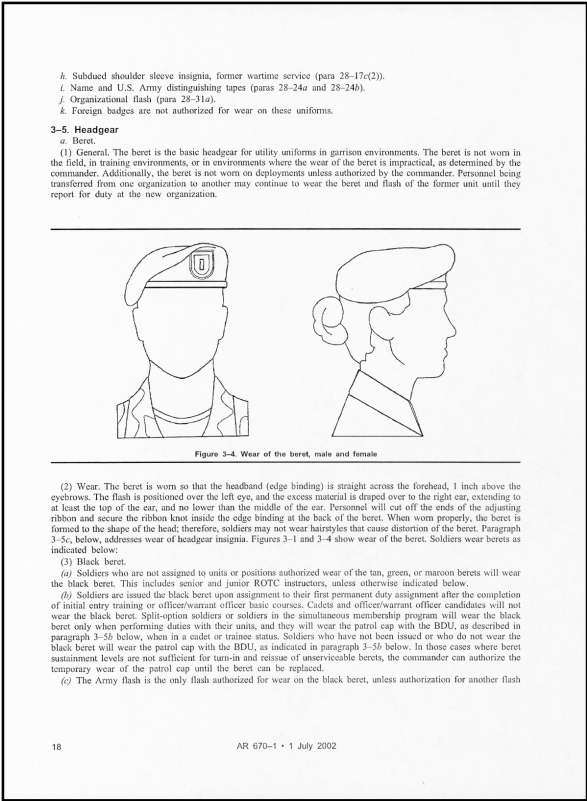
Other items that were revised include hair, nails, contacts, cell phones, pagers, headgear, “camelbacks,” desert battle-dress-uniform insignia, regimental distinctive insignia, physical fitness uniform wear and pregnancy, the explosive ordnance detachment badge and the black mess uniform.

The beret, which is a new clothing item, is addressed in the updated regulation. When soldiers are not wearing the beret outside, they should be carrying it, Messman said.

Soldiers should not attach headgear to the uniform,

hang it from their belt or put it in a uniform pocket. This headgear policy has always been in effect, Messman explained. However, in maneuver environments placement of the utility cap is at the commander’s discretion, she added.

What people have to remember is that the Army regulation is the only publication that accurately



The wear of the beret is just one of the many changes to the updated AR 670-1.

spells out proper wear of the uniform, Messman said. Regardless of what media sources put out, soldiers should first seek clarification from AR 670-1, and focus on what the regulation states now, and what will go into affect in August, she added. The uniform regulation was last revised in 1992, but in order to keep up with the pace of changing times the regulation is periodically reviewed.

“The regulation has to change with time,” Messman said. “If not, we’d still be wearing uniforms from the Civil War.”

A new policy regarding cell phones and pagers is one addition to the regulation that was generated by technology, Messman said.

Messman is the principal adviser for changes to the uniform policy, but she said the changes that were made came from recommendations.

“We depend a lot on leadership in the field,” Messman said. “They know the young soldiers of today. I get their input on when it’s time to allow something that wasn’t allowed before, or when something starts becoming a distraction and needs to be addressed.”

The policy change authorizing braids and cornrows is an example of items that were once seen as inappropriate in the workplace, but now considered conservative and business-like, Messman said. And the policy clarification that prohibits two-toned manicured nails is an example of a growing trend that has no place in the work area, she added.

People usually have the hardest time accepting the grooming policies, Messman said. “We don’t want to rob people of their individuality,” Messman said. “But the Army has never professed to be a leader in fashion. Our goal is to create a conservative, professional image and some of the more trendy styles will not accomplish that goal.”

Other highlights of the changes are: Dreadlocks are prohibited for all soldiers. Prohibited hair dye colors include purple, blue, pink, green, orange, bright fire-engine red, and neon colors. “If soldiers use dyes, tints, or bleaches, they must choose those that result in natural hair colors,” Messman said.

Women are authorized to wear braids and cornrows; baldness is authorized for males, either natural or shaved.

The Army flash is the only one authorized on the black beret, unless authorization for distinctive flashes was granted (i.e., OPFOR) before June 14, 2001.

The updated policy can be found on the following Web site:[http://www.usapa.army.mil/pdffiles/r670\\_1.pdf](http://www.usapa.army.mil/pdffiles/r670_1.pdf).

# New guide offers instant references for Army NCOs

Story by Staff Sgt. Dave Enders  
Army Link News

FORT BLISS, Texas - A new, pocket-sized reference for NCOs is only a few mouse clicks away.

Field Manual 7-22.7, The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide, is now available for electronic download; hard copies of FM 7-22.7 are scheduled to arrive at active-duty units this month.

According to the guide’s preface, FM 7-22.7 provides the Army’s NCOs a guide for leading, supervising and caring for soldiers. While not all-inclusive nor intended as a stand-alone manual, the guide offers NCOs a ready reference for most situations.

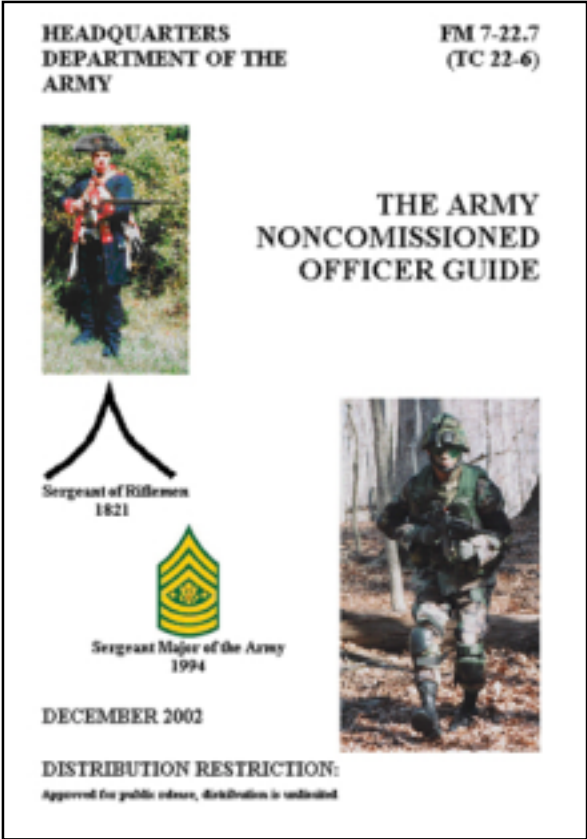
Field Manual 7-22.7, which replaces Training Circular 22-6, The Noncommissioned Officer’s Guide, is five chapters long and 5 1/2 inches wide by 8 1/2 inches long and fits in the cargo pocket of a battle dress uniform. The handbook offers instructions, guidance and information on NCO-related topics, including leadership, training, history, duties, responsibilities and authority.

General John N. Abrams, former commander of the Training and Doctrine Command, directed an update to Training Circular 22-6, The Noncommissioned Officer’s Guide in September 2001. He did so based on recommendations from the Army Training and Leadership Development Panel members who had conducted a study to determine how the Army could make a professional NCO corps even better. One of the panel’s recommendations was that FM 22-600-20, The Army Noncommissioned Officer Guide, be re-established, updated and published, but the recommendation didn’t address TC 22-6.

Soon after the USASMA director of Training and Doctrine, Sgt. Maj. Ricky Smith, was asked to oversee the project, THE EDGE Research and Development, an El Paso firm, was awarded the

contract. Stephen Snyder, one of THE EDGE contractors and a retired Army major, worked with two retired sergeants major on the project.

“These are still soldiers who are passionate



about what they’re doing,” said USASMA Command Sgt. Maj. Clifford R. West.

Although his writing team was responsible for assembling most of the information for FM 7-22.7, Snyder credited several others as key to the success. “The sergeant major of the Army took a personal interest in this project,” said Snyder.

In fact, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack L. Tilley

endorsed the NCO Vision in the beginning of the book. Snyder also specifically credited three others who he said greatly contributed to the vision and concept for FM 7-22.7: TRADOC Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony J. Williams, Combined Arms Center Command Sgt. Maj. Cynthia A. Pritchett, and West.

These top NCOs continually offered suggestions and guidance throughout the development of FM 7-22.7, said Snyder.

The writing team focused those top NCOs’ vision to build a portable reference that Army leaders can easily reference in a variety of situations. The team recommended it as FM 7-22.7.

“It is a ready reference that draws from literally hundreds of other field manuals, Army regulations, Army pamphlets and other sources,” said Snyder. “We wrote this so that all Army leaders could use it and benefit from it.”

The U.S. Army Publishing Agency will distribute FM 7-22.7 to all established active-duty account holders; however, Army National Guard and Reserve units must order copies. All Army components may order copies of FM 7-22.7 through USAPA as they would any other field manuals.

In addition to the printed version, USAPA has established an electronic version for download at the Gen. Dennis J. Reimer Training & Doctrine Digital Library, [www.adtdl.army.mil/cgi-bin/atdl.dll/fm/7-22.7/fm7-22.7.htm](http://www.adtdl.army.mil/cgi-bin/atdl.dll/fm/7-22.7/fm7-22.7.htm). NCOs can link to the Reimer library through Army Knowledge Online, [www.us.army.mil](http://www.us.army.mil) and the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy home page, <http://usasma.bliss.army.mil/dotd/ncoguide.htm>.

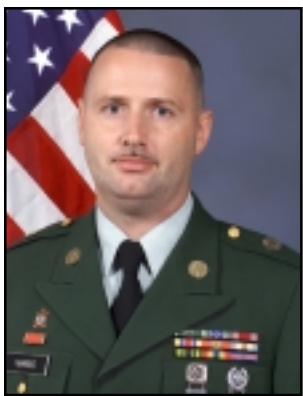
From the AKO home page, go to the Reference section and select “Manuals.” The USASMA home page contains a direct link, and there’s also a link at the “Training and Doctrine” section of the site.



# MAKERS

## 81st RSC NCO of the Year

ORLANDO, Fla. – Staff Sergeant Frank E. Harris, an Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) soldier stationed at Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 365th Corp Support Battalion, located in Jackson, Miss., was recently selected as the 81st Regional Support Command



Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. Harris, the full-time motor sergeant for the 365th CSB, was selected during the 81st RSC Soldier of the Year Board held in Orlando, Fla.

“It feels wonderful to be named the NCO of the year for the 81st RSC,” Harris said. “Being part of the competition has shown me just how big of a part the 81st RSC plays within the entire Army Reserve. There are a lot of outstanding NCOs in the 81st RSC. It’s a great honor to have competed against the best of the best and receive the honor of NCO of the Year for the command.”

Harris said soldiers competing in the competition next year should give it all they got. “When you train on common task, like NBC, don’t take it lightly, train to be proficient,” Harris said. “I would like to see other soldiers enjoy the excitement and fun that I have experienced. If possible I would like to be part of the staff of the Soldier of the Year competition when they convene next year.”

Harris’s next step in the competition is at the U.S. Army Reserve Command level where he will, once again, compete for NCO of the Year. (By SSG Derrick witherspoon, 81st RSC, PAO)

## Phillip A. Connelly Awards

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – Soldiers from the 75th Combat Support Hospital in Tuscaloosa, Ala., can now proudly call themselves the best field cooks in the U.S. Army Reserve.

That title comes from winning first place in the Phillip A. Connelly Awards Program in the U.S. Army Reserve field kitchen category.

Other winners include the 16th Corps Support Group Dining Facility of V Corps in Hanau, Germany, which took first place in the Phillip A. Connelly small garrison category. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Medical Brigade, 13th COSCOM at Fort Hood, Texas, was runner-up.

The large garrison winner was Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Infantry Brigade, 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized), at Fort Carson, Colo., and runner-up was the NCO Academy, Camp Jackson, Korea.

Runner-up for best field kitchen was Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade, 1st Armor Division/V Corps, Friedburg, Germany.

The U.S. Army Reserve runner-up was the 900th Quartermaster Company, El Paso, Texas.

The Army National Guard winner was the 995th Maintenance Company of the Kansas Army National Guard, Smith Center, Kan., and the runner-up was Headquarters, 50th Personnel Service Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, Lawrenceville, N.J.

The Connelly Award is named in honor of the late Philip A. Connelly, past president of the International Food Service Executives Association, highly regarded as the driving force behind obtaining IFSEA sponsorship for the Department of the Army’s recognition of excellence in Army food service.

Civilian and military food service professionals from all across the country judge the Department of Defense food service programs.

The winners will travel to Dallas, Texas, for the Joint Services Excellence in Food Service Awards April 12.

Two soldiers will be chosen to represent the team at the Johnson and Wells Culinary Arts School in Dallas, Texas.

This prestigious school is another way the IFSEA rewards winners in the competition. The school will provide one week worth of professional culinary education to the troops. (By Spc. Travis Edwards, Fort Bragg, N.C.)

## Change of Command

### 7226th Medical Support Unit

FORT JACKSON, S.C. - Soldiers of the 7226th Medical Support Unit commemorated the many years of service of a departing commander while celebrating the succession of a new one at a change of command ceremony held at Fort Jackson.

Lieutenant Colonel Althea Watson, previously the executive officer and training officer of the unit, assumed command of the 7226th in place of the former commander Lt. Col. Irene Frazier. Watson, a native of Winnsboro, S.C., had been in the unit for seven years before taking on her first command assignment since being commissioned in 1984. In the face of the greater responsibilities and challenges that come along with being in command, she is maintaining a positive attitude and is encouraged by the fact that she’s not a new face to the unit.

“It’s a very exciting, daunting, and humbling experience, but the fact that I know these soldiers and their capabilities is a comforting thought,” Watson said.

Frazier, who trained Watson for the job, is confident that Watson is more than qualified to lead as commander and that the unit is in good hands. Frazier chose Watson because of her good communication skills and investigative strategies.

“She believes in getting the job done no matter what it takes, and I hope that the unit continues to work with Col. Watson as they have with me,” Frazier said.

Frazier served as commander for four years and will remain a member of the unit. However, she is moving on to become the officer in charge of the blood donor center on post. Although this was also her first assignment as a commander, her leadership has left a lasting impression on the unit that they will use as the standard.

“Her command was firm, fair and consistent, and she was the same with all soldiers. She dealt with soldiers on an individual basis and made an attempt to get to know them by name. She also cared for her soldiers and supplied their needs,” said Sgt. 1st Class Roslyn Peterson, first sergeant of the unit.

Peterson, along with many other soldiers,

sees the same tradition of leadership continuing under Watson’s command, and they feel almost certain that they will continue to move forward as a unit. Because she received training for the position for three years from Frazier, she has acquired many of the same skills and techniques.

“Lieutenant Colonel Watson has a lot of the same qualities as Lt. Col. Frazier. She looks out for soldiers, and that’s what’s most important,” said Sgt. Brian Scott, the unit ward master.

The medical unit’s mission is to support all aspects of medical procedures in the form of labs, veterinary services, dental, food inspection, and preventative medicine. Watson wants to ensure that soldiers remain properly trained so they may be able to meet the needs of the Army.

“The soldiers are already able to hit the ground running, and I want to continue in the same vein,” Watson said.

(By Spc. Briana G. Wright, 319th MPAD)

## 17th Annual Supply Excellence Awards

WASHINGTON - Fourteen Army Reserve units were recognized at the 17th annual Chief of Staff, Army Supply Excellence Award Ceremony, held here September 5.

The Wilmington, N.C., based 650th Transportation Detachment, a transportation unit under the 81st Regional Support Command, was one of the units recognized at the CSA/SEA award ceremony. The 650th Trans. Det. was recognized for winning first place in the MTOE Company Without Property Book category. The 81st RSC’s 844th Engineer Combat Battalion, located in Knoxville, Tenn., was also recognized for being winner-up in the MTOE Battalion With Property Book category; and also recognized was the 81st RSC’s 1015th Maintenance Company, located in Fort Gillem, Ga., for being winner-up in the Direct Support Unit (Small).

General John M. Keane, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, presented an award to each winning and runner-up unit in the seven Army Reserve categories.

Speaking to the Army Reserve’s top supply soldiers and civilians before the presentations, Lt. Gen. James R. Helmly, Chief of the Army Reserve, commented on the speculation going on about a potential conflict with Iraq. He said that a reporter had recently asked him when, not if, the United States was going to attack.

Helmly told the reporter that he did not care whether or not the United States was going to take military action against Iraq or any other country. His concern was readiness.

“Our job is to be ready to go when we’re told and where we’re told.”

Helmly said that kind of readiness, that sort of warrior ethos, was just what the units being recognized had achieved in the area of supply excellence.

“We’ve got to spread that excellence around the Army Reserve,” he said, “and spreading excellence around is your job as leaders.”

Helmly asked all the soldiers and civilian employees to be sure to thank their family members for all their support when they returned home because the families were definitely a part of the winning Army Reserve team and had made possible the sort of achievements being honored today.

(By Lt. Col. Randy Pullen, OCAR PAO)



# ROUNDUP

## 81st RSG

### 1186th USA TTB

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – After the terrorist attacks on Sep 11, 2001, seeing concrete barricades used for force protection appear around Reserve centers was not uncommon. However, the barricades at a Reserve center here are a little more colorful than the standard gray ones.

Members of the 1186th U.S. Army Transportation Terminal Brigade (TTBDE) teamed up with students from the Woodland Acres Elementary School to paint the concrete barricades around the Reserve center located on the corner of Atlantic Boulevard and Pecan Street here.

“We didn’t want the Reserve center to be a fortress,” said Col. Perry Clawson, the 1186th Brigade Commander.

When the barricades started arriving at the Reserve center, getting the community involved was the goal of the unit.

The 1186th TTBDE teamed up with Woodland Acres as part of the Adopt-A-School Program. The Adopt-A-School Program is a nation-wide program designed to promote community relations and provide positive role models.

“Our intent was to build a better rapport with the school and community,” said Clawson, from Orlando, Fla.

Concrete barricades and painting supplies were delivered to the school and the students engaged in a painting contest to decorate the barricades with patriotic designs.

After all of the barricades were painted, they were returned to and placed in front of the Reserve center with the painted sides facing the building.

A five-person team consisting of Clawson, brigade Command Sgt. Maj. Adam Gresham, Sgt. Shaun Thomas, and vice-principal Robert Gresham judged the assortment of barricades and picked a first place entry.

Ties between units and communities have always been a goal of the Army Reserve. Getting the school and community involved in the painting was an easy task. It was the beginning of a partnership between members of the 1186th TTBDE and the students of Woodland Acres Elementary School. “The school was eager to participate,” said vice-principal Gresham. “We have a great appreciation of you guys.”

(By Sgt. 1st Class Keith Johnson, 204th MPAD)

### 812th Transportation Battalion

BIRMINGHAM AL. – The second annual Deployment of Excellence Award was awarded to the 812th Transportation Battalion from Charlotte, N.C., by Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. John M. Keane during a ceremony held in Arlington, Va.

The 812th won the Deployment of Excellence Award for excellence for moving personnel and equipment during a deployment to Egypt for Bright Star 2002 - a U.S. Central Command multinational exercise.

The 812th assisted in the deployment of 450 soldiers from eight units in six states. “The key to our success relied on accomplishing everything in our time-line, following Army regulations, and when we didn’t have resources

available we came up with creative ways to adapt and overcome,” said Cpt. Joseph Dreksler with the 812th. “It’s very rewarding to be recognized for the hard work we do day in and out.”

The 812th was one of ten units from the National Guard, Reserve, and Active Army whom received this award.

(By Staff Sgt. Scott Fisk, 81st RSC, PAO)

## 5th MED GP

### 788th Medical Detachment

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. - Members of three U.S. Army Reserve units from all corners of the state participated in deployment ceremonies in preparation for support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The 788th Medical Detachment from St. Petersburg was the smallest group deploying. The eight-person unit’s mission is preventative health measures, such as water and air quality testing and pest control. Where they will be performing their mission was the question.

“We are going to Fort Stewart, then from there we’re not sure,” said 1st Lt. Mark Haxton, the 788th’s detachment commander. “We’ll find out when we get to Fort Stewart.” This is the first deployment for Haxton.

Sergeant First Class Kevin Higgins, the detachment’s senior enlisted soldier, will also be away from his family for the first time.

“I’m a little nervous, and a little excited,” he said. Higgins works for the Pinellas County Health Department.

The rest of the members of the detachment said they were ready to go.

“It wasn’t a surprise,” said Pfc. Crystal Houghton. “My pride is up there,” said Houghton. “I’m feeling all of the Army values right now.”

“This is what I was hoping for when I joined,” said Pfc. Noelle Chaveriat. Chaveriat will be taking with her a small pocket bible that her grandmother had sent to her grandfather during World War II. He carried it throughout Europe.

“It didn’t stop a bullet or anything,” said Chaveriat, “but she wanted me to take it.”

(By Sgt. 1st Class Keith Johnson, 204th MPAD)

## 642nd ASG

### 7236th Medical Support Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C.— Army Reserve soldiers from the 7236th Medical Support Command (MSC) leaving active duty after almost a year at Fort Bragg in support of Operation Noble Eagle. A ceremony honoring their service was held at Fort Bragg’s ROTC field, at Collins and DeGlopper streets.

The 70 or so soldiers of the 7236th MSC, which has two components, were activated Nov. 13, 2001. The command’s medical support unit processed more than 20,000 soldiers through medical and dental stations Fort Bragg’s Soldier Readiness Center. The command’s blood donor unit held blood drives at Fort Bragg, Pope Air Force Base and Fort Jackson, S.C., collecting almost 6,000 pints of blood, which saved the U.S. Army more than \$1.4 million.

Operation Noble Eagle is the stateside military response to the Sept. 11, 2001, attack on the United States. Military forces based in the United States

assist in security, medical, engineering, logistics and communications, as well as perform other support services. Operation Enduring Freedom is the country’s overseas effort to combat terrorism.

(By Staff Sgt. Gwendolyn Coley, 2125th GSU)

## 415th CM BD

GREENVILLE, S.C. – Sergeant Major William Larry Tidwell received Retirement Honors at the Greenville based Headquarters, 415th Chemical Brigade on November 15, 2002.

Lieutenant Colonel (P) Les Carroll, acting Commander of the 415th Chemical Brigade, hosted the ceremony. The guest speaker for the event was Brig. Gen. Arthur Nuttall, former Commander of 415th Chemical Brigade.

Flowers were also presented to Mrs. Tidwell on behalf of the Command to show appreciation for her support to the Command, and to the United States Army during her husband’s tenure of duty.”

(By Master Sgt. Cassie Hill-Johnson, 415th CM BD)

### 447th Chemical Detachment

GREENVILLE, S.C. - K.C. Kiessling couldn’t help getting emotional Saturday morning in the stark drill room at the 1st Lt. Thomas Kukowski U.S. Army Reserve Center at Greenville’s Donaldson Center.

She was there to see off the man she’s been married to for only a month, Capt. Jamie Kiessling, commander of the 447th Chemical Detachment.

The 10-soldier reserve unit from Greenville is being deployed for up to a year under Operation Freedom/Operation Noble Eagle, the overseas and homeland fight against terrorism.

“It’s awesome to be affiliated with men of this caliber,” K.C. Kiessling said above din of the soldiers and their family members.

Families from the unit, who have become fast friends, have formed their own support group to help get through their loved ones’ deployment, she said.

About 55 Army Reservists from the Greenville area have been deployed so far, said Paul Adams with the public affairs office for the 81st Regional Support Command in Birmingham, Ala. About 4,400 Army Reservists are assigned to 55 units in South Carolina, he said.

The 447th’s soldiers leave today to report to Fort Stewart, Ga., where they’ll receive the exact orders on where they’ll be deployed.

The unit’s broad mission is to access nuclear, chemical and biological warfare and its effect on the battlefield and to advise commanders.

It’s the first deployment for the soldiers, who range in age from 22 to 48, Kiessling said. “Even though they have concerns about being away from their families, the soldiers, have come together well,” He added.

Guess speaker Brigadier General Arthur Nuttall told the unit during Saturday morning’s farewell ceremony that they are now part of the active force that will meet “any challenges that are out there that may hurt our freedom.”

“Today we’re at war. Our freedom is being challenged, and it’s time for us to stand up and meet that challenge,” Nuttall said.

(By Sarah G. Bonnette, The Greenville News)



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# NEWS BRIEFS

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## Tax-Relief Bill

ARLINGTON, Va. — A bill that would offer eagerly awaited tax relief to reservists, guardsmen and their families recently passed the Senate Finance Committee, an important hurdle on the way to becoming law.

The Foreign and Armed Services Tax Fairness Act of 2002, introduced in July by Finance Committee chairman Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., proposes amendments to the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that would provide a variety of tax breaks to military members.

The bill's major provision would allow reservists and National Guard members to deduct the cost of military-related overnight travel from their annual tax bill.

This benefit would affect the estimated 100,000 individuals who travel more than 150 miles, one way, each month to get to their drill duty, according to Jay Spiegel, executive director of the Reserve Officers Association in Washington.

"The military pays to fly you to your annual two-week duty, but getting to drills is your nickel," Spiegel said. "That can really add up for some people."

The bill calls for the travel deduction — which used to be permitted before the Tax Reform Act of 1986 tightened the rules — to be "above the line," which means that reservists could take the deduction if they itemize, or simply accept a standard deduction.

"That's an important point, because it means the bill won't just benefit the people who are better off financially — they are the ones who usually itemize," Spiegel said. "Junior enlisted reservists usually aren't making enough to itemize their taxes."

But the above-the-line deduction "is also what makes the bill so expensive," Spiegel said: The tax deduction proposed by the bill would cost the government about \$800 million in lost revenue over 10 years, according to estimates by Congress' Joint Committee on Taxation.

Overall, the entire cost of the bill to the government would be about \$1 billion over 10 years. The other provisions that make up the remaining \$200 million cost of the bill include a tax exemption for the repayment of student loans to military personnel; a provision to make all death gratuity payments nontaxable; and a capital gains tax exemption to government employees who sell their homes.

The U.S. government does not collect taxes on the home-sale profits of homeowners who live in the residence for at least two to five years before they sell. But military and U.S. Foreign Service personnel have a difficult time meeting that residence requirement.

The bill suspends the occupancy requirement for any period the owner serves on official duty more than 50 miles from the home as a member of the uniformed service, Foreign Service or as a Defense Department civilian employee.

The next step for the bill is for the full Senate to vote on the matter, which could happen as early as Friday, according to a staff member close to the Senate's senior leadership.

"I think it's a certainty it will pass the Senate," Spiegel said. "Politically, something that benefits the military in this environment will be well-received."

Meanwhile, the House passed a similar bill earlier this summer — but that bill does not include the pivotal travel tax deduction.

However, another House bill, The Reservist Tax Relief Act introduced last year by Rep. Jim Ramstad, R-Minn., does include that provision.

Although the Ramstad bill has languished untouched in the House Ways and Means Committee, Spiegel said its very existence might prompt House leaders to agree to include the travel tax provision if the Baucus bill passes the full Senate and leaders of both chambers then meet in conference to hash out their differences.

(By Lisa Burgess, Stars and Stripes)

## TROA Scholarship

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The Retired Officers Association (TROA) officially opened its 2003 "Base/Post Scholarship" program on November 1, 2002, and will be offering individual \$1000 grants to 100 dependents of active duty personnel worldwide.

To be eligible, a student must be under age 24, working on a first undergraduate degree,

and a dependent child of an active duty service person—enlisted, warrant officer, or officer—in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. This includes members of the drilling Reserves and National Guard.

This year grant winners will be randomly selected from among applicants within each of the seven services. No GPA, SAT nor essays will be needed for the Base/Post application. TROA membership is not a requirement.

Application is via the TROA website only. To apply, go to <http://www.troa.org>. Look for "Educational Aid" on the opening page of the TROA website. Follow the easy instructions for the Scholarship Fund Application. Deadline for submission is 12 p.m. EST March 1, 2003.

Semi-finalists will be notified by email and the self-check on the website by March 30. Winners will be notified in May.

TROA is the nation's leading association for military officers, with nearly 390,000 members. Membership is open to active duty officers and warrant officers, Reserves and National Guard, plus former or retired officers and warrant officers, and surviving spouses.

(By Trey Linnemeier, TROA)

## AKO E-Mial

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — In terms of personnel business, Army Knowledge Online became the official e-mail for all soldiers in November.

U. S. Army Personnel Command replaced all soldier e-mail addresses currently in its database with AKO addresses.

AKO e-mail can be read through the AKO Web site or can be forwarded to other e-mail accounts owned by the soldier for convenience. Mail forwarding can be implemented by choosing the "personalize" tab once inside the AKO portal.

(Army News Service)

## New Job Finding Program

WASHINGTON — A new program, called "Helmets to Hardhats," was launched in January to help soldiers find commercial construction jobs.

The intent of the program is to help those with military experience get hired in civilian construction trades that the program's organizers claim are facing a critical labor shortage.

Soldiers who leave full-time military service, as well as current members of the National Guard, the Army Reserve and the four other reserve components, are eligible for assistance from the federally-funded program.

"The construction industry needs to recruit 1.6 million new workers over the next five years to replace those people who will be leaving the labor force," said officials from The Center for Military Recruitment, Assessment and Veterans, citing several federal and industry projections. "Over 40 percent of the work force will retire in the next 10 years."

The center launched Helmets to Hardhats in January after a \$3.4 million appropriation for the pilot program was approved by Congress as part of the 2003 Defense Appropriations Act.

Matthew Caulfield, a retired Marine Corps major general, and his son Dan, a former Marine Corps officer, who served during the Persian Gulf War, are the program's principal organizers.

"We need people to maintain our infrastructure, our roads and bridges and dams," the general said. "The way we're going, in 10 years we won't have enough iron workers. What better source of people to bring into the construction industry than those who have already been trained in the military?"

Helmets to Hardhats officials hope to recruit 23,000 people into the industry during its first year and 166,000 during the next two years.

The program emphasizes jobs that offer higher than average wages and benefits. A recent national survey indicates that union workers earn an average of \$4.08 more per hour than do other construction workers.

It is also a way for the construction industry to find new workers who have already acquired the discipline and dependability as well as the leadership skills and the safety training that is stressed by the military.

"This is a match made in heaven, but the construction and military organizations don't know each other very well. We have to educate employers about what the military does," Dan Caulfield explained. "We believe that Helmets to Hardhats can do that."

The 16-member staff, including five field recruiters and many more field trades consultants, is currently carrying some key messages to 15 unions, with more than 7,000 locals that form the AFL-CIO's Building and Construction Trades Department.

One message is that veterans want work. The unemployment rate among military veterans is three times higher than the national average. That included a 14.8 percent unemployment rate among veterans between 20-24 years old during the first quarter of 2002.

Another is that former soldiers offer the construction industry a stable work force, looking for good jobs and careers without having to go to college or enroll in a training program.

"They join the service when they're 18 and single, and they leave three or four years later married and with a couple of kids," Dan Caulfield pointed out. "Johnny doesn't need a training program. Johnny needs a job."

Union apprenticeship programs make it possible for veterans and reservists to learn a trade while they're earning a good living, the Caulfields stressed. And the lessons they learned while in uniform could make it possible for the new workers to begin their apprenticeships at a higher level than people who have never worked before, they added.

Helmets to Hardhats can also help recruiting, its advocates believe, by ensuring people who are thinking about joining the military that they will be able to use their training to get a good job when they return to the civilian world.

"This puts a market place value on military skills, and we're here for you when you're ready," Dan Caulfield said.

More information about the program and on-line registration can be found at [www.helmetstohardhats.org](http://www.helmetstohardhats.org).

(Master Sgt. Bob Haskell, Army Link News)

## Army Limits Re-Up Options

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Feb. 25, 2003) - With the buildup of forces overseas, the Army is projected to exceed its end strength authorized by Congress this year and re-enlistment options are being adjusted to keep the service within required limits.

The Army is authorized 480,000 troops, and Congress has mandated that the Army stay within 1 percent of that number, Sgt. Maj. James Vales, the G1 retention sergeant major said. Projections show that for fiscal year 2003, personnel strength may exceed that ceiling. By reducing options, no one will be prevented from re-enlisting, but the numbers will be moderated, he added.

Two things that could jeopardize soldiers who want to continue their career in the Army are: repetitive or recent non-judicial punishment, and slow rank progression resulting from a pattern of marginal conduct or performance, the MILPER message stated. If a soldier fails a physical training test while in the re-up window, he's automatically ineligible to re-enlist unless he gets a waiver from the first general officer in his chain of command, Vales said. In the past, if the soldier retested and passed, then he would become eligible, Vales added.

(By Staff Sgt. Marcia Triggs, Army Link News)